

Crab Stuffed Mushroom Caps

This appetizer is frequently requested for family holiday get-togethers. The best mushrooms for stuffing are not necessarily the largest. Ideally, I like them to be ½ to one inch in diameter when they are fully cooked. Bear in mind that the fresh mushrooms will shrink by about one third as they cook. Portabella mushrooms work very well in this recipe; but any button type mushroom will do. When you are finished, you will have a lot of mushroom stems for soups, omelets, mushroom cheeseburgers, etc.

2 24-ounce packages of fresh mushrooms

2 6-ounce cans of crab meat

½ cup Merlot or red wine vinegar

1 8-ounce package of cream cheese

2 tablespoons butter

2 cloves minced garlic

4 ounces of minced onion

6 ounces of very thinly sliced Havarti

2 tablespoons of paprika

Remove cream cheese from package and place in a large mix bowl to soften. Remove stems from mushrooms. Place mushrooms in a separate bowl and marinate with Merlot. Refrigerate marinating mushrooms. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Drain crab meat and add to cream cheese. Add garlic and onion. Mix well.

Spread butter on the bottom of a large rectangular baking dish. Stuff mushroom caps with mixture; and place in baking dish. Place a thin slice of Havarti over each stuffed mushroom cap. Sprinkle stuffed caps with paprika. Bake covered for 40 minutes. Reduce heat to 225 degrees and bake for an additional 45 minutes.

Any leftover stuffing makes an excellent dip.